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Hatfield Rural District Council.

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

FOR

1908.

THE

HATFIELD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1908.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my 22nd annual report—that of the year 1908.

Referring to the schedules of vital statistics, the death rate is the lowest which has been registered during my tenure of office being 2·8; the birth is 1·6 higher; the rate of infantile mortality is 52·6 less than the average of the last ten years. The corrected death-rate is 2·6 lower than that average.

The latter part of the year was noticeable for an outbreak of Diphtheria at Northaw, and of Scarlet Fever in Hatfield. No cases resulted in death, and there were no deaths from any of the notifiable diseases, nor from Whooping Cough or Measles—a result which must be considered as satisfactory.

There has however, been a good deal of friction connected with the matter of Hospital removals. When cases are not removed to Hospital, I am subjected to a great deal of abuse and even threats, which are not always very thinly veiled. I cannot say that I am much influenced by such things but the facts being as they are, it appears to me that there must be a general demand for removal of all cases of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria to Hospital and that there must be a re-consideration of the position assumed by the Sanitary Authority. As you, gentlemen, are aware, there is a provision of six beds for Scarlet Fever and two for Diphtheria and the practice which you have sanctioned on my advice, is, that cases which do not present any features which call for special treatment,

either in the way of nursing or isolation, should be left at home. Great pressure has been brought to bear on me to make exceptions to the general rule under which I have worked, but it is of course impossible for me to do more than to hold the balance between contending parties as evenly as is possible. If exceptions are made they can be quoted as precedents, and used to demonstrate that impartiality does not characterise my proceedings, as I have always tried that it shall. The fear of infection appears to me to amount almost to a mental obsession, and it seems idle to endeavour to cope with it. Everyone, apparently, knows all which is to be known about infective disorders, but I am afraid that such knowledge does not lead to the support of the work of a Sanitary Authority. I have so frequently placed you in possession of a basis of fact and experience in connection with infective disorders that I do not propose to go over the same old beaten track again. I must, however, point out that additional six beds for scarlet fever and four beds for diphtheria, at least, will be required, if all cases are to be hospitalised. So far as my opinion is concerned, there is no alteration; but it is necessary in view of the general mental obsession to which I have referred to reconsider the position. If there be, as I gather there is, a general demand that all cases of scarlet fever and diphtheria are to be admitted to Hospital, there must, I presume, be a satisfaction of the demand. I therefore suggest the propriety, in the coming year, of removing all cases to Hospital, provided there is accommodation, and at the beginning of the New Year to attempt to form an estimate as to the number of beds likely to be required. However many beds are provided there will remain the possibility of the really urgent cases being unprovided for. It is perhaps unfortunate that a demand for the provision of a sufficient number of beds for all cases has not been presented to the Sanitary Authority. The facts in my possession are certainly not in favour of such a demand; however, it appears to me that one should be presented. Mere fault-finding and abuse of your humble servant do not commend themselves as methods of practical utility. The Sanitary Authority, after all, *is* the Authority, and I only its servant. No one has shown more anxiety to deal with matters of public health in an efficient manner than you have done, and the present condition of

the health of the District does not appear to show that either you or your officers have been backward in doing their utmost to promote the wellbeing of the inhabitants.

Water Supply.—There is no alteration.

Sewerage.—The sewerage of Hatfield and the methods to be used for its disposal are still under consideration.

The sewerage of Little Heath still remains for final settlement.

There has been no change in the methods of removal and disposal of house refuse. The contractors have carried out their duties without my receiving any complaints.

There has been no pollution of rivers and streams in the District to my knowledge.

There has been sufficient inspection by your officers of lodging-houses, slaughter-houses, dairies, cowsheds, milkshops, bakeries, factories, and workshops. and there are no offensive trades carried on in your District.

The report of the Sanitary Inspector gives the details of the number of inspections made, which I enclose.

Housing.—I should be very pleased to see the removal of some of the older houses in Hatfield. Many of them are not desirable residences. The difficulties which present themselves are that the inhabitants have not the means with which to pay high rents; owners of good-class cottages are not anxious to have undesirable tenants; and if the old cheap houses are pulled down the dispossessed will have difficulty in finding accommodation. Housing accommodation has undoubtedly improved throughout the District, and I do not think that the difficulties to which I have referred are in any way insuperable.

In conclusion, I have to thank you for the support which you have given to me, and the courtesy with which you invariably treat me.

I remain,

Your obedient Servant,

LOVELL DRAGE, M.D. (Oxon),

Medical Officer of Health.

The Hatfield Sanitary Authority.

15th February, 1909.

Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces and Homework.

1.—INSPECTION.

Including Inspections made by Inspector of Nuisances.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices,	Prosecutions.
Factories ... ... (Including Factory Laundries)	2	1	...
Workshops ... ... (Including Workshop Laundries)	2	...	...
Workplaces	2	...	...
Homeworkers' Premises	...	...	...
Total	6	1	...

2.—DEFECTS FOUND.

Particulars.	Number of Defects.			Number of Prosecutions.
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts:—				
Want of Cleanliness	6	6	...	...
Want of Ventilation	...	...	...	...
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...
Want of Drainage of Floors...	...	...	...	...
Other Nuisances	...	...	...	...
Sanitary Accommodation — insufficient	1	1	...	...
Sanitary Accommodation — unsuitable or defective	...	...	...	...
Sanitary Accommodation — not separate for sexes	...	...	...	...
Total	7	7	...	...

Workshops on the Register ... 23

Table I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1908 and Previous Years.

Name of District - - - HATFIELD RURAL.

YEAR	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non-Residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
				Under 1 year of age.		At all ages.						
		Number.	Rate.*	Number.	Rate per 1,000 Births Registered.	Number.	Rate*				Number.	Rate*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1898	6963	185	26·5	16	86·5	100	14·3	13	...	...	100	14·3
1899	,,	205	29·5	15	72·7	90	12·9	13	...	...	90	12·9
1900	,,	199	28·5	22	110·5	89	12·5	11	2	...	87	12·3
1901	7551	197	26	21	106·5	79	10·4	12	...	...	79	10·4
1902	,,	188	24·8	20	106·3	100	13·2	12	...	1	101	13·2
1903	,,	208	27·5	15	72·1	97	12·8	9	...	5	102	13·5
1904	,,	193	25·5	25	129	100	13·6	13	...	4	104	13·3
1905	,,	182	24·1	8	43·9	86	11·3	11	1	4	89	11·9
1906	,,	200	26·4	21	105	87	11·5	9	...	3	90	11·9
1907	,,	162	21·4	21	129	86	11·3	12	3	7	90	12·3
Averages for years 1898-1907		191	25·6	18	96	91	12·3	11	·6	2·1	93	12·6
1908	7551	207	27·2	9	43·4	72	9·5	5	...	4	76	10

*Rates in Columns 4, 8 and 13 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 23,386.

Total population at all ages at Census of 1901, 7,551.

Number of inhabited houses at ditto, 1,582.

Average number of persons per house at ditto, 4·7.

Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District: Hertford and Ware Infectious Hospital, Potter's Bar Cottage Hospital, County Hospital, Hertford, and Herts County Lunatic Asylum, Hill End.

The Union Workhouse is within the District.

Table II.

Vital Statistics of Separate Localities in 1908 and Previous Years.

Names of Localities	1. Hatfield.				2. North Mimms.				3. Northaw.				4. Essendon.			
Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year
	a.	*b.*	*c.*	*d.*	*a.*	*b.*	*c.*	*d.*	*a.*	*b.*	*c.*	*d.*	*a.*	*b.*	*c.*	*d.*
1898 ...	4330	...	72	11	1511	...	16	4	582	...	7	1	540	...	5	...
1899 ...	,,	...	57	9	,,	...	22	4	,,	...	5	...	,,	...	6	2
1900 ...	,,	132	54	17	,,	44	19	5	,,	16	6	1	,,	10	10	...
1901 ...	4754	123	62	17	1568	44	7	2	664	12	5	1	565	18	5	1
1902 ...	,,	125	63	12	,,	42	21	4	,,	14	9	3	,,	7	7	1
1903 ...	,,	128	67	11	,,	56	22	3	,,	8	6	1	,,	16	7	...
1904 ...	,,	129	68	15	,,	45	21	8	,,	5	3	...	,,	14	9	2
1905 ...	,,	114	57	5	,,	43	19	2	,,	12	5	...	,,	13	5	1
1906 ...	,,	129	60	17	,,	43	16	2	,,	13	8	2	,,	15	6	...
1907 ...	,,	103	57	9	,,	39	17	8	,,	7	8	2	,,	13	4	2
Averages of 1898–1907	...	...	62	12	...	...	19	4	...	...	6	1	...	...	6	·9
1908 ...	4754	127	46	6	1568	46	18	2	664	12	2	1	565	22	10	...

Table III.

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the Year 1908.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.							TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH LOCALITY.				NO. OF CASES REMOVED TO HOSPITAL FROM EACH LOCALITY.			
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.						Hatfield.	North Mimms.	Northaw.	Essendon.	Hatfield.	North Mimms.	Northaw.	Essendon.
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards.								
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup...	13	...	1	9	1	2	...	...	1	12	...	...	1	3	...
Erysipelas	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	14	...	2	8	2	2	...	11	3	...	...	2	...	...	...
Totals	28	...	3	17	3	5	...	11	5	12	...	2	1	3	...

Isolation Hospital - - HERTFORD AND WARE INFECTIOUS HOSPITAL.

Total available Beds ... 8. Number of Diseases that can be concurrently treated ... 2.

Table IV.

Causes of and Ages at Death during the Year 1908.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Deaths at the Subjoined Ages of Residents whether occuring in or beyond the District.							Deaths at all ages of Residents belonging to Localities whether occuring in or beyond the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.
	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards	Hatfield.	North Mimms.	Northaw.	Essendon.	
Epidemic influenza	3	...	...	1	...	1	1	1	1	...	1	1
Enteritis	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis.)	4	...	1	...	...	3	...	1	1	...	2	...
Other tubercular diseases	3	...	1	...	2	...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Cancer, malignant disease	9	...	...	...	...	8	1	6	2	...	1	...
Bronchitis	8	1	1	...	...	...	6	5	2	...	1	1
Alcoholism (Cirrhosis of Liver.)	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	...
Permature birth	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Heart diseases	8	...	...	...	1	5	2	4	2	...	2	...
Accidents	4	...	...	...	2	1	1	4	...	...	...	1
All other causes	33	8	...	1	...	10	14	19	10	2	2	2
All causes	76	10	3	3	5	30	25	46	18	2	10	5

Table V.

Infantile Mortality during the Year 1908.

Deaths from Stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

Cause of Death.		Under 1 week	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 1 month.	1-2 months.	2-3 months.	3-4 months.	4-5 months.	5-6 months.	6-7 months.	7-8 months.	8-9 months.	9-10 months.	10-11 months.	11-12 months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
Wasting Diseases	Premature Birth... ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other Causes.	Convulsions	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
		2	...	...	...	2	2	2	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	9

Births in the year { Legitimate. 205. Illegitimate, 2.

Deaths in the year of { Legitimate infants, 9. Illegitimate infants, ...

Deaths from all Causes, at all ages, 72.

Summary of work done through the Sanitary Inspector in the Rural Sanitary District of Hatfield during the year ending Dec. 31, 1908.

	Total number for Year.	Result of Inspection, &c.
NUISANCES:—		
1. Complaints received ...	50	
2. Nuisances detected without complaint ...	30	Hatfield, North Mimms, Essendon.
3. Nuisances abated ...	80	
4. Notices served ...	2	Hatfield.
5. Summonses taken out	...	
6. Convictions	...	
INSPECTIONS:—		
7. Cottages inspected ...	120	Hatfield. North Mimms, Northaw, Essendon.
8. Lodging - houses inspected	2	Kept in good order.
9. Slaughter-houses inspected	3	All kept clean.
10. Bakehouses inspected	8	,, ,,
11. Dairies and Milk Shops inspected	16	,, ,,
12. Cowsheds inspected ...	15	,, ,,
13. Workshops inspected...	21	
IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED:—		
I. HOUSES—		
14. Filthy houses cleansed, sec. 46 Public Health Act, 1875	18	Hatfield, North Mimms, Northaw, Essendon,
15. Houses disinfected ...	17	Hatfield, North Mimms, Northaw.
15a. Compensation paid for destruction of infected bedding...	6/11	
16. Overcrowding abated	1	Hatfield
17. Houses placed in habitable repair	9	
18. Houses closed... ...	...	
II. WATER—		
19. Houses erected or rebuilt for which "Certificates" were applied	...	
20. "Certificates" granted	21	
21. ,, deferred	...	
22. Wells sunk or improved supplies of water afforded ...	5	Improved supply.
23. Wells cleansed or repaired	3	
24. Wells closed	2	New Town, Hatfield.

Sanitary Inspector's Summary—Continued.

	Total number for Year.	Result of Inspection.
25. Houses connected with water mains	...	Many connected.
26. Cisterns cleansed, repaired, or covered ...	2	Covers repaired.
27. Samples of water taken for analysis ...	3	
III. SEWERS—		
28. Houses connected with sewers	6	Hatfield.
29. Earth, pail, or improved Privies constructed or existing Privies altered ...	3	Repaired and Improved.
30. Privies and w.c.'s repaired ; w.c.'s supplied with water	5	
IV. FOOD—		
31. Seizure of unsound meat, &c.	...	
V. VARIOUS—		
32. Animals improperly kept, removed ...	4	Rabbits, &c.

H. T. SIDWELL, F.I.S.E., Mem. C.M.E.S., M.I.Mun.E.,
District Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances.

Ralph Humphry, Printer, Hatfield.